

Blessing the Children International Team & Missionary General Policies

1. Cancellation and "Refunds"

Refunds: Blessing the Children International (BCI) is a tax-exempt nonprofit organization; the Internal Revenue Service (I.R.S.) does not allow us to "refund" contributions. Contributions and payments made for mission trips are generally considered non-refundable since your trip payments and donations on behalf of your team are pooled into a Team Budget for that trip. Each Team Budget remains under the full control and authority of BCI, and is used for ministry expenses related to that Team's outreach and BCI's general operating expenses.

Cancellation: A person cancelling for legitimate reasons (e.g., medical or family emergency) may apply to BCI in writing to have their payment amount credited to another person to go in his/her place on their scheduled team, or to have their payment amount credited to their participation on a future team (providing the future team departs within twelve months of the original team's departure).

2. Doctrinal Statement Adherence

In the "oneness" spirit of John Chapter 17, BCI accepts several Christian "doctrinal/creedal positions" for our BCI Teams. Regardless of those "positions," when joining a BCI team, we still require all BCI Team Members and Missionaries to abide by our Statement of Faith, here:

http://blessingthechildren.org/Forms/Statement_of_Faith.pdf

3. Discounts

Families who join an international team and pay for two family members in full receive a 20% discount for up to two additional members (i.e., on the 3rd and 4th family members). Families are defined as parent(s) plus their biological or adoptive children, provided the children are financial dependents living in the family home. Discount applies to Initial Trip Cost, not to extended time.

4. Insurance

Each BCI Team member is personally responsible to provide their own respective insurance coverage of any and all types, including but not limited to, medical, hospitalization, life, disability, death, lost baggage, lost or stolen personal property, and any and all other insurance which a Team member may need or desire. Many companies, such as AIG (<http://www.travelguard.com/>) offer trip insurance.

5. Dress Code

Most countries where BCI Teams serve have a more conservative approach to clothing than we are used to in our own culture. As guests, we choose to respect the culture of the people we are serving by honoring their requests that our Teams and Missionaries wear modest and culturally appropriate clothing. Specific dress code details may vary, but in general: women should wear dresses, skirts or slacks with fully-covered chest, midriff and shoulders. Men should wear long slacks/pants with shirts that cover their shoulders. Jeans are acceptable for men and women, but at least one dressier outfit should be brought for church services and special occasions. Sometimes modest and conservative shorts will be okay for both men and women, but not always! We ask team members to remove body piercings (other than for a single pair of earrings for women), and to wear only the simplest jewelry (preferably no jewelry).

6. Adult-to-Youth Supervisory Ratio

BCI Hosted Teams: Children under age 16 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Age 16 and 17 requires parent/guardian permission as evidenced on the application. BCI will provide one adult leader for every four minors (age 16 and 17) who do not have a parent/guardian with them, for BCI hosted teams.

Teams not Hosted by BCI: For churches and other organizations hosting their own team to the BCI ministry, we require the team to provide one adult for ever four minors (under age 18 at time of departure). BCI Team Leaders and Local Staff members cannot be factored into this ratio; each Team must provide their own adult supervisors.

7. Weekly Reporting

Missionaries and Team Members staying longer than three weeks in Ethiopia are to email BCI (Missions@blessingthechildren.org) missions department weekly with a simple report of their past week's activities and any interesting, unique or encouraging experiences. The length of the email/report should be about one typed, double spaced, page (about 300 words). The intent of this weekly email/report is to keep open and ongoing communications between the Missions Department in the Corporate Office of BCI and its volunteers.

8. No Smoking/Drinking/Illegal Drugs

BCI does not allow smoking, drinking alcoholic beverages, or use of illegal drugs. Team members who violate this policy are subject to being sent home immediately at their own expense.

9. No Dating

BCI has a "no on-field dating" policy. This includes newly formed couples and couples who are already dating. All forms of physical contact (hand holding, kissing, hugging, sitting on laps) are prohibited both in public and in private. This necessary policy helps us maintain integrity with our national staff and partner churches, helps maintain team unity, helps you concentrate on your Team's mission outreach activities, and also allows future BCI Teams to keep coming back! For a more detailed dating policy, please see:

http://blessingthechildren.org/Forms/Dating_Policy.pdf

10. Christian Witness

As part of this team, I realize I will be expected to take an active role. I will make it a priority to attend all meetings, training, and participate in all team activities. I will keep good communication with my team leader. It is my responsibility to let my team leader know, before an event, if I am unable to attend, and to obtain any information I would have missed from the meeting.

I will keep a good Christian witness at all times and in all places. I realize that failure to keep my Christian witness could be cause for my removal from the team at my own expense.

11. Rights/Liability Release & Risk Acknowledgement

All BCI Team Members are asked to release certain rights and liabilities. Each Team Member will be asked to: waive his/her right to file a lawsuit in exchange for Biblically-based mediation; release all leaders and organizations from liability; acknowledge and accept hazards, risks, and other dangers associated with this mission trip; acknowledge and accept responsibility for all insurance needs; authorize BCI Leaders to make essential medical / emergency / hospitalization decisions if necessary and accept full responsibility for all such expenses including shipping your body home should you die; agree to abide by all policies, guidelines, rules (including Management Policies below); and agree to submit to all leaders and those in authority.

12. Management Policies

In answering God's Great Commission mandate, BCI sends team members and missionary volunteers around the world to take part in discipling the nations; many of these nations present risks greater than what you may normally be exposed to at home. Because BCI can never completely eliminate every risk or prepare team members and missionaries for every situation, you should join in prayer with your Sending Supporters and Sending Churches regularly, for God's wisdom, protection, and guidance in every aspect of the BCI mission trip.

Team members and missionaries serving in the field must submit to the authority of BCI Staff and respect the opinions of local partner church leaders.

You agree that local BCI Staff holds the final authority in the decision to send home any team member or missionary for not adhering to the policy presented herein. In such an event, all expenses for an early return are the responsibility of the team member or missionary.

